



HIGHLIGHT

Introducing the UA (University Administrator) System at Niigata University

At Niigata University, the Niigata University Vision 2030 and the Fourth Mid-Term Goals and Plan position social co-creation—guided by the principle of “from a university in academia to a university in society”—as a core strategy. To accelerate the social implementation of research outcomes and fully leverage the University’s societal functions, we are strengthening our management framework.

As part of this effort, we are developing organizational, HR, and professional development systems so that highly skilled specialists across the University can help drive university management through effective use of external funding. We also established the UA (University Administrator) position as a new professional category alongside faculty and administrative staff, launching the UA Office in April 2023 within the Headquarters for Management Strategy, directly under the President, and introducing the UA system in April 2025. In this issue, we introduce the key features of the UA system.

UA Office Website: <https://www.niigata-u.ac.jp/university/facility/management/ua/>
(Available in Japanese only)



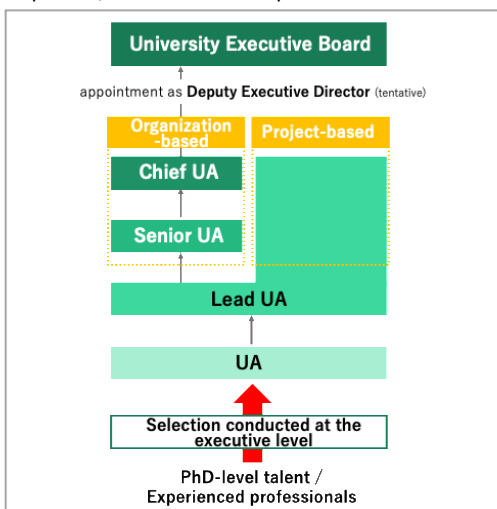
Dr. Kazushige Kawabata,
Director,
University Administration
Office, Headquarters for
Management Strategy

Highlights of the Niigata University UA

- UA-specific career ladder, with pathways to executive leadership
- Hiring and promotion led by the executive team
- Performance-based annual salary (merit pay based on evaluations)
- Discretionary work system

The UA System: A Personnel Framework Designed for UAs

The UA system defines four career levels based on roles and responsibilities, including a pathway to serve as Deputy Executive Director and engage in university management. From the UA Office, UAs are assigned to relevant organizations and centers according to their expertise, such as research promotion and industry–academia–regional collaboration.



Chief UA

- Envision and communicate the University’s future.
- Lead university-wide strategies collaboratively.
- Maximize UA performance to drive university reform.

Senior UA

- Secure external funding to drive collaborative strategies for university reform.
- Maximize performance through organizational management.

Lead UA

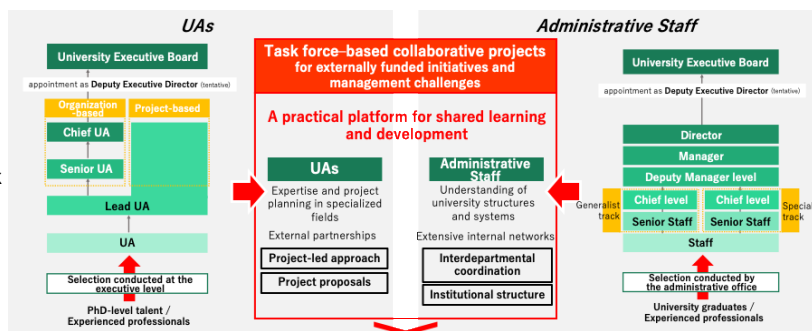
- Lead externally funded projects in the UA’s area of expertise.
- Lead and mentor UA teams to deliver results.

UA

- Research and understand public programs, funding, and communication proactively.
- Plan and drive assigned projects and missions.

Emphasizing Collaboration Between UAs and Administrative Staff

In large-scale initiatives such as the J-PEAKS project and other programs, faculty members, UAs, and administrative staff work collaboratively through task forces. UAs lead planning and project development, while administrative staff—well versed in internal structures and institutional systems—support implementation by translating ideas into practice. By leveraging their respective strengths, these task forces advance university reform while also serving as a platform for the professional development of both UAs and administrative staff.



Expanding projects into university reforms involving organizational restructuring

※The multi-track personnel system is scheduled for review in FY2025 and implementation in FY2026.



Start Your Next Career with Us.
We are Expanding UA Recruitment!

We are hiring UAs to support diverse areas across the University. See our recruitment page for details.
<https://www.niigata-u.ac.jp/university/recruit/ua/>
(Available in Japanese only)





ELSI Centre Hosts International Workshop (Nov. 17)



The Research Centre on Emerging Technology and Governance (ELSI Center), part of the Institute for Research Administration, has been designated as a President-led Special Zone under Niigata University's J-PEAKS program to strengthen its capacity to address ethical issues related to human-centered innovation and the use of AI.

On November 17, 2025, the Centre co-hosted an international workshop, "Evaluation in the Age of AI: People and Systems that Open the Future," with the Center for Evaluation at Saarland University (Germany) and the Japan Evaluation Society, following progress in external funding in the humanities and social sciences and the adoption of a regional–university collaboration initiative by the Japan Tourism Agency.

Around 80 early-career researchers and practitioners from Japan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Germany (including online participants) took part in lively discussions. Through J-PEAKS, Niigata University will collaborate with partners in Japan and abroad to generate research outcomes rooted in the region and contributing globally, and to promote their implementation in society.

<https://www.irp.niigata-u.ac.jp/news/12001/> (Available in Japanese only)



Human Resource Development Program: Management Promotion Skills Seminar Held (Dec. 8)

On Monday, December 8, 2025, Niigata University held a Management Promotion Skills Seminar as part of the J-PEAKS human resource development program, aiming to strengthen administrative staff capabilities, deepen understanding of university management, and gain diverse perspectives through collaboration with UAs.

In Part 1, Executive Vice President Eri Tsukamoto and Toshihiro Tsutsumi, General Manager of Human Resources and General Affairs at Ultrafabrics Holdings Co., Ltd., delivered lightning talks on strategic thinking and execution for university staff and answered pre-submitted questions. In Part 2, administrative staff and UAs discussed "Perspectives Needed for Core Talent to Support the Future of Universities," exchanging ideas across departments and roles.

Participants highlighted changes in mindset, the value of horizontal networks, and insights gained from other departments and UAs. Niigata University plans to continue creating joint development opportunities from FY2026 onward. <https://www.niigata-u.ac.jp/j-peaks/news/1017629/> (Available in Japanese only)



UPDATE



Info Session: University-wide "Strategic Leap Program (1st Stage)" —Call Opens April 2026

As previously announced, this call for proposals requires collaboration with new centers and related units as part of the University's efforts to strengthen research capacity. A briefing session will be held around March–April to introduce these centers' functions and features and possible collaboration.

Individual consultations will also be available. Details will be announced in the next issue or on the University's J-PEAKS website.



Schedule Announced for "Niigata University J-PEAKS WEEK" (Sep. 2026)

As announced in the previous issue, "Niigata University J-PEAKS WEEK" will bring together J-PEAKS-related events and share the University's efforts to strengthen research capacity and advance university reform. The core period is scheduled for September 7–11, 2026.

We are preparing the program as a place to think and create together through dialogue, site visits, and other activities. Please save the dates and stay tuned for updates.

● J-PEAKS Mini Column—Voices from the Field ●

The UA system, launched last April, is now approaching its first anniversary. I stepped into this role at the same time, and the past year has been a rapid learning curve as we worked to put the system into practice. Because our University moved early to establish a personnel framework for highly skilled professional staff, we have welcomed many requests from universities across Japan for dialogue and information exchange. I believe this interest also reflects our recent achievements, including securing major initiatives such as J-PEAKS and FLAGS through close collaboration among faculty members, UAs, and administrative staff.

Looking ahead, we will continue strengthening the UA system as an attractive career path where talented people can thrive, while further advancing university reform and positioning the University as a national leader in developing professional talent.

● Contact & Website ●

○Contact : Research Promotion Div., Niigata Univ.

TEL: 025-262-7174

MAIL: kenkyukyoten@adm.niigata-u.ac.jp

○Niigata Univ. J-PEAKS Website

<https://www.niigata-u.ac.jp/j-peaks/>

Updates on J-PEAKS–related events and activities are available here.



○Niigata Univ. J-PEAKS Internal Website

<https://app.cais.niigata-u.ac.jp/shurl/fw/2PLWiy>

To support timely information sharing and ensure transparency, materials such as the program's overall design, budget allocations, and meeting documents are available to internal users. For more detailed information, please scan the QR code.

